

Alternatively, the molar mass determination may be conducted off-line after the concentration determination by diverting the high molecular weight fraction to a molar mass detector that has a cell capable of containing and effecting rapid mixing of the entire HMWF that is separable from the main flow of pumped solvent. The off-line embodiment permits more accurate determination of the average molecular weight and simplifies the calculation of average molecular weight. This is then equivalent to determination with zero dispersion or separation of the polymer but permits elimination of interfering low molecular weight substances. This configuration is shown in Figure 2.

None of Miroslav, Nielsen et al. and Fyvie et al. teaches or suggests an “off-line” molar mass detection. “Off-line” molar mass detection that “permits more accurate determination of the average molecular weight and simplifies the calculation of average molecular weight” would not have been obvious in view of the Miroslav, Nielsen et al. and Fyvie et al. references on-line detection that does not improve accuracy or simplify the determination of average molecular weight. Claims 4 to 20 depend from claim 1 and claims 34 to 36 depend from claim 31. The rejections of claims 1, 4 to 20, 31 and 34 to 36 should be withdrawn.

Claim 28 has been amended to a step of effecting a minimally dispersive separation to yield a high molecular weight fraction “comprising polycarbonate oligomers and polymers comprising at least two bisphenol A units....” Support for the amendment is found in the specification at page 8, lines 8 to 29. The specification page 8, lines 8 to 29 states:

A minimally dispersive separation is one that rapidly but substantially separates a high molecular weight fraction (HMWF) from a low molecular weight fraction (LMWF). The high molecular weight fraction is defined herein as comprising all oligomeric and polymeric products having at least two monomer units of at least one monomer. For example, the high molecular weight fraction of a sample comprising polycarbonate would comprise polycarbonate oligomers and polymers comprising at least two bisphenol A units.... In order to enable the fastest possible analysis time, it is preferred that the minimally dispersive separation create the least possible dispersion of the HMWF while maintaining its separation from the LMWF.

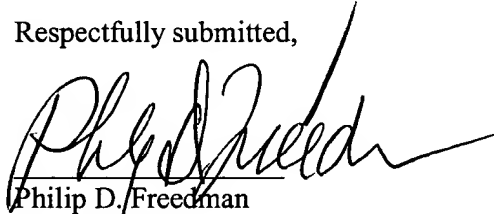
None of Miroslav and Nielsen et al. teaches or suggests a “minimally dispersive separation... to yield a high molecular weight fraction... comprising polycarbonate oligomers and polymers comprising at least two bisphenol A units.” A minimally dispersive separation that enables the “fastest possible analysis” would not have been obvious in view of the Miroslav and Nielsen et al. references non-minimally dispersive separation that does not provide the “fastest possible analysis.” Claim 29 depends from claim 28. The rejection of claims 28 and 29 should be withdrawn.

Support for new claims 38 to 42 is found in the specification at page 8, line 29 to page 9, line 6. New claims 38 to 43 depend from claim 28 and should be allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks and applicants’ July 22, 2002 Amendment after Final Rejection under 37 C.F.R. §1.116, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1, 4 to 21, 23 to 29, 31 to 32, 34 to 36 and 38 to 43 are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that any further action is necessary in order to place this application in condition for allowance, he is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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10/21, 2002

Attachments:

Clean Version of Claims

Marked Up Version of Claims